

in the middle, as I say, of a serious policy debate about Superfund in the community. In 1993 and 1994, the Democratic administration with a Democratic House and a Democratic Senate had 2 years to put together and move its own Superfund bill. They came forward with a bill, and that excused or limited the liability of big and small polluters in a number of ways. Whatever the merits of the bill, Mr. President—and I voted for it in committee—it failed to pass either branch of the then Democratically controlled House and Democratically controlled Senate. Therefore, you had at that time a Democratic President, a Democratic House, and a Democratic Senate and they could not make reforms in Superfund, showing how difficult this problem is.

Now, in our committee, Senator SMITH has taken the lead and put forward a bill some 8 months after we took over the Congress, that is, the Republicans. Since introduction of that legislation in the subcommittee, Senator SMITH and others have met with the administration for countless hours to explain the bill, to make technical changes, and to clarify its intent where needed. We are in the middle of bipartisan negotiations. We are striving to understand the administration's concern with the bill and to accommodate it wherever possible. We are waiting for more information from the administration on cost concerns the administration has raised and the impact of these changes, how they affect the agency, for example, and its resources.

In short, the administration has a serious forum in the Environment and Public Works Committee where we are meeting every day to exchange views on Superfund. This is why I find it curious and disappointing that the administration would choose this particular time to launch a factually inaccurate and politically contrived attack on the negotiation process and product.

I have counseled colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the committee that I am fortunate enough to chair that we must have a bipartisan approach if we are going to solve these complex environmental problems. I believe Superfund could be a model for how we can reach agreement on a sensitive problem in this year, a difficult year because of the political implications of the Presidential campaign. I believe Superfund could be a model for how we reach agreement on these difficult matters. I fail to understand how the President's advisers on environmental issues, who surely understand that Superfund proposals cannot be reduced to simple solutions and slogans such as "polluters must pay," can engage with us in serious negotiations while on the other hand they seek partisan advantage based on distortions.

Mr. President, it is time for the administration to choose. Does it want Superfund this year or is it willing to miss this chance and permit Superfund to continue to exact its hideous toll on

our economy? If we are going to fix Superfund, the administration must tone down its rhetoric and work with us to fix this badly broken program.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor. Mr. THOMAS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for 5 minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered. The Senator may proceed.

Mr. THOMAS. I thank the Chair. I will be brief so the Senate can move on.

TAIWAN RESOLUTION

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I wish to indicate how disappointed I was last evening that we were unable to take up the resolution on Taiwan and the Taiwan Straits. We had prepared a sense-of-the-Congress resolution early in the week, had distributed it and talked to many. It was agreed to by the administration. It was also sponsored by the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and the ranking member. In any event, the upshot was that its introduction was objected to on the minority side, I think largely by the staff, and therefore we did not do it. We do intend, however, to come back and do that next week.

Mr. President, as all of my colleagues know, over the last 8 months the People's Republic of China has held an increasing number of missile tests and military exercises.

Last year, starting in July, there were 21 to 26 missile tests; in July and August, troop movements in provinces bordering Taiwan. The purpose of these tests has obviously been to intimidate the Taiwanese. They have been accompanied by denunciations of President Li. They have been timed to coincide, of course, with the election that takes place there.

Now, unfortunately, the People's Republic of China has escalated the situation with these new tests, tests that are the closest ever to the main island and purposely, of course, timed to affect the election which will take place later this month. They have also been close to Taiwan's two ports, and that has been very worrisome. These are reckless, I think, and greatly disturbing to most people in this country.

We have a strong interest in the peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question. That interest of ours is central to the three communiques and the People's Republic of China joint communiques that we have entered into over the years, as well as the Taiwan Relations Act, which is to provide stability in that part of the world and which provides for a peaceful movement toward that one-China policy.

I firmly believe we need to reexamine our relationship with China. I think we

have to narrow the number of issues in which we become involved and not seek to run their country. But when we do have agreements, then we have to make sure that they are adhered to by both the Chinese and ourselves. Our relationship currently is filled with items that have not been consistent with these agreements—the intellectual property agreements, the nuclear proliferation in Pakistan and Iraq.

So, Mr. President, it is necessary that we do state our position; that we do insist on a peaceful direction and resolution of this issue; that we do clarify our one-China policy; that we do congratulate the Taiwanese in their movement toward democracy and open markets and urge that same open market approach take place in China.

So I commend the Taiwanese, their government, for reacting calmly to these provocations. They, I think, have shown considerable restraint, and I congratulate them on their long march toward democracy. I hope that continues during the election next week.

I yield the floor.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION WELFARE AND MEDICAID PROPOSALS

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, 3 months ago President Clinton vetoed the Balanced Budget Act of 1995. The failure to balance the Federal budget continues to hang like a dark cloud over American families and businesses. The heavy yoke of Federal budget deficits still threaten to choke off economic growth and future prosperity. Moreover, by vetoing this legislation, the President also preserved a welfare system which traps millions of children into a cycle of dependency.

A few weeks after the balanced budget veto, President Clinton stopped welfare reform again by vetoing H.R. 4, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1995. However, the President also pledged that, "I am nevertheless determined to keep working with the Congress to enact real, bipartisan welfare reform."

Mr. President, 1 month ago the men and women who serve as the chief executives of our 50 States presented the President, the Congress, and the American people with bold new proposals to restructure Medicaid and reform the welfare system. Gathering from across the country, the Governors set aside their own differences and found the common ground and bipartisan consensus which have been missing in Washington. The Governors have presented us with a fresh opportunity to bridge the differences which divide the Congress and the President.

The Committee on Finance has recently completed a series of hearings on the National Governors' Association proposals. On February 22, six Governors, four Democrats and two Republicans, urged the Congress to quickly pass both welfare and Medicaid reforms. We heard from Governors Carper, Chiles, Engler, Miller of Nevada,